



Key English Resources on Ancestry.com

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Objectives

1. Learn techniques to find and use key English resources and records on Ancestry.com to solve a research problem.
2. Identify additional learning aids for English research that are available at Ancestry.com.

Introduction

Ancestry.com is a subscription website that offers a large collection of family trees, genealogical record collections, and family history services. They offer a fourteen-day free trial, a monthly or 6-month membership subscription that includes various options. Ancestry.com owns Newspapers.com and Fold3.com and offers a membership package that includes access to these websites as well. Members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints have access to a free Ancestry.com membership and can register for this account at: <https://www.familysearch.org/campaign/partneraccess/>.

Research Preparation

Begin with a specific research question that includes a date and location. In England, it is important to know the parish in which your ancestor lived and if possible, their occupation. An occupation will help differentiate your ancestor from additional individuals who may possess the same name in the same location. When determining a research question, work from your known information to the unknown to further your research successfully. After choosing a research objective, determine the record set that would contain the desired information and understand the jurisdiction in which the records were kept.

Searching Specific English Record Sets at Ancestry.com

A popular record that is commonly used in English research are census records. Instead of using the general search option at Ancestry.com, consider searching the indexes by year or browse by enumeration district. To search a census record for a specific year, click the "Census and Voter Lists" option in the drop-down list that appears when you click on "Search", located at the top of the page. This page is found at: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/categories/ukicen/>. It will be necessary to scroll down the page to see the list of British censuses. Each census title is a link to that specific census record set. After selecting an England census record set to search, scroll below the search options to read details about the record collection.

To browse by enumeration district, first select a year and location of a census from the list of England census records as described above, then the option to search by enumeration district

will be available in the column on the right side of the screen. An enumeration district was a sub-district of England's registration districts, which were used to register births, marriages and deaths in England beginning in 1837. When searching by enumeration districts, choose the county, civil parish, and enumeration district found in the browse box. If you are unsure of which district your ancestor might be located in, select a district and read the description of the area covered by the enumerator on the first page. Then use the map at: <https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore>. The maps on this website give you the option to select an old map to overlay over a modern map and adjust the transparency of the overlay to visualize the homes and addresses recorded in the census records.

This visualization will allow you to determine the correct enumeration district to research. You can also view an old map with a current map sided by side at <https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/side-by-side>.

Browse this collection

To browse this image set, select from the options below.

County

Civil Parish

Enumeration District
[District 11](#)
[District 12](#)

In addition to census records, the collection of City and County Directories is another great resource to include in your research to assist with locating your ancestor. Ancestry.com has a large collection of directories that can be found as individual record sets but they can also be browsed by collection. Searching by collection is a great way to see record availability. To do this, go to the general directory collection titled "U.K., City and County Directories, 1600s-1900s" at: <https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/1547/>. It is more effective to understand what year and location is available prior to searching the index by selecting England in the Country option located in the "Browse this collection" box on the right side of the screen. Then select the desired county and the available directories will appear.

Browse this collection

To browse this image set, select from the options below.

Country

County

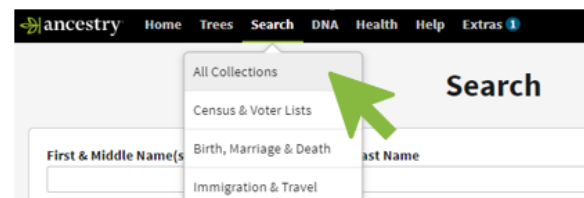
Directory
[1830 Pigot's Directory](#)
[1839 Robson's Directory](#)
[1842-4 Pigot's Directory](#)
[1880 Kelly's Directory](#)
[1903 Kelly's Directory](#)
[1920 Kelly's Directory](#)
[1927 Kelly's Directory](#)
[1931 Kelly's Directory](#)

Searching Specific English Record Sets by Location

To focus your research on a specific location, begin by going to Ancestry's home page and select the "Search" tab at the top of the page. Then, click on "All Collections."

Scroll down to the Explore by Location section that contains a map and click on "UK & Ireland." Then select England on the map.

Notice the three headings at the top of the page, just below the title "England." The first heading, "Collections," lists English data collections that are sorted in categories. The second heading, "History," provides a brief summary of historical facts, featured England data collections, and a sample of famous English people in historical documents. The third heading, "Resources," gives an informative explanation of the three main English record types and lists repositories and websites that could be helpful with your English genealogical research.

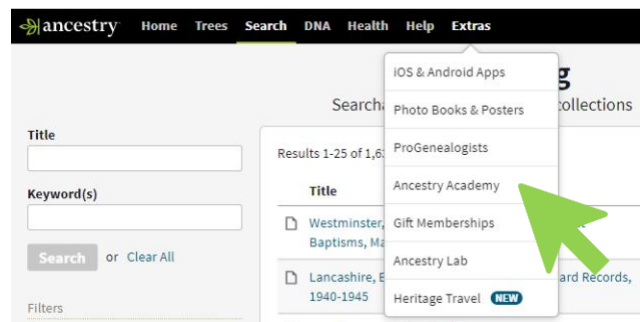


On the right side of the screen, counties within England are listed as individual links that take you to the unique collections that Ancestry.com possesses for that specific county. Next to the name of the county is the number of record sets that are available for that county. If the county you are searching for is not listed, Ancestry.com does not have any unique data collections for that region. Some general England collections may contain documents for the counties not listed. Note the record sets that are available and check back often because databases are regularly added. To search the general England collections, click on the green “View all in Card Catalog” button and it will take you to the records that are available for England in the card catalog. On this page, the collections are sorted on the left into categories, counties and also by dates. There is an option at the top of the page, on the right, that allows the collections to be sorted by date added, collection title, date updated, and record count.

This page also contains a “More help” section that offers a map of England, a link to the England message boards, and the Member Directory for Ancestry.com.

Learning Aids

Ancestry Academy offers nine short videos in a series called “Exploring Your English Roots on Ancestry” that provides information about English research on their website. You can access these videos by clicking on “Extras” found on the top menu. Then select Ancestry Academy and scroll down to the subheading titled, “Researching Outside the United States.” Within this category you will discover the nine short videos that can teach you more about researching your ancestor in England.



Ancestry.com has a blog specifically for the United Kingdom that contains many articles that can assist with English research. This blog can be found at: <https://blogs.ancestry.co.uk/ancestry/>.

Tips for Researching on Ancestry

Because the spelling can vary with names, wild cards can be used in searches when you don't know an exact spelling or when the name has been spelled multiple ways. A wild card is a symbol used in substitution of letters in a word. With Ancestry.com, an asterisk (*) can be used to represent zero to five letters. A question mark (?) can represent one letter. You are unable to use a wild card for the first or last letter and each word using wild cards must contain at least three letters that are not wild cards. For example, if you didn't know whether the surname Sorenson was spelled as “Sorenson” or “Sorensen,” a wild card could be used in place of the second to last letter as “Sorens?n” to perform a more effective search.